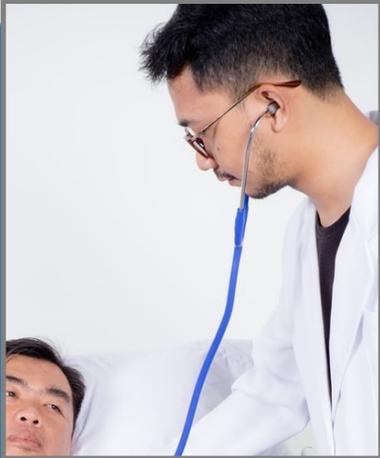


# HEALTHCARE HIGHLIGHTS

The Rural AHEC Student Newsletter



## November's Healthcare Career Focus:

### Primary Care Physician

Primary Care Physicians, sometimes called Family Physicians, care for their patients by overseeing their general health. They are medical professionals that keep health records of their patients to ensure consistent, collaborative care and support patients' preventative and chronic disease care. They are good resources for medical advice, vaccination records, and referrals to medical specialists. They treat patients of all ages and with all kinds of conditions.

### What might I do as a Primary Care Physician?

Practice in a variety of settings, such as medical clinics, private practices, long-term care facilities, or hospital settings—may also provide telehealth (virtual) services

Perform annual check-ups, wellness screenings, and preventative services to provide info/referrals regarding:

- *high blood pressure or cholesterol levels*
- *risk factors for diabetes, heart disease, and cancer*
- *immunizations/vaccines*
- *developmental disorders*
- *mental and behavioral health*

Care for sick patients who present symptoms of colds, allergies, or flu

Provide primary and/or follow-up care for patients with broken bones or sprains, infections, burns, wounds, or other afflictions

Prescribe medication for illnesses or chronic conditions

Keep accurate and comprehensive medical records for each patient, utilizing electronic storage and patient portals to ensure access for patients and specialists



### How do I become a Primary Care Physician?

- Attend and graduate from a bachelor degree program in biology or other related program
- Attend and graduate from a four-year school of medicine or osteopathy
- Complete a residency (3 to 7 years depending on field of study)
- Complete a fellowship in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics or geriatrics, if desired
- Years of higher education typically range from 11—15 years

**Average Salary:**  
**\$161K—\$229K in New York State**  
**Depending on area**

## **What is it really like to be a Primary Care Physician?**

Primary Care Physicians play an important role in our communities. Their services provide:

- Annual physicals for sports and employment
- Vaccines/health screenings for entry into educational systems
- Written permission to return to work or stay home
- Resources for healthy lifestyle information (nutrition/exercise)
- Recommendations for relief of anxiety, pain, and insomnia
- Long-distance medical services (telehealth) for people with limited access to healthcare



Watch this short video about what it means to be a resident on your way to being a practicing physician:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhSNOSBLxos>

Meet several family physicians in this very interesting and eye-opening article: <https://www.aafp.org/students-residents/medical-students/explore-career-in-family-medicine/day-as-family-doctor.html>



***“I’m biased (being a proud family physician with a varied practice, including inpatient work), but the joy of longitudinal relationships and the challenge of the ever changing state of the art in primary care makes me confident that there will always be a cadre of us that can’t imagine doing anything else... We have to change to some degree (be the leader of the medical home and learn to work in a team) in order to improve care and spread ourselves around better, but the basic satisfactions of primary care will stay the same. I have confidence we won’t disappear...”***

Carla K, MD  
Primary Care Physician

Note: This quote refers to the fact that there are not enough medical students pursuing Primary Care Practice to meet the medical needs of our aging society... become an exception!

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*Please contact us if you have questions about healthcare career opportunities or educational pathways to healthcare careers!*

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (R-AHEC) is one of nine centers in the New York State Area Health Education Center (NYS AHEC) organization. Our mission is to improve health and healthcare through education.

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